

NOAA
FISHERIES

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management

Modifying the Commercial Retention Limit For Blacknose Sharks and Non-Blacknose SCS in the Atlantic Region



August 2016

Outline

- Background
- Potential Alternatives
 - Status Quo
 - Bycatch Limits for Non-Blacknose SCS
 - Commercial Retention Limits for Blacknose Sharks
- Discussion



Background

- 2007 Stock Assessment (SEDAR 13)
 - One stock across both the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions
 - Determined the stock to be overfished and overfishing was occurring
- Amendment 3 Final Rule (June 1, 2010)
 - Established separate blacknose shark and non-blacknose SCS quotas, and linked the quotas
 - Continued to allow landings of sharks with gillnet gear south of North Carolina and in the Gulf of Mexico based on comments that fishermen were able to avoid blacknose sharks
 - Encouraged all shark fishermen to avoid blacknose sharks
 - Stated that if fishermen continue to target blacknose sharks, NMFS would implement more management measures to ensure the rebuilding of the stock

Background (cont'd)

- 2011 Stock Assessment (SEDAR 21)
 - Concluded that blacknose sharks are two separate stocks (one in the Atlantic and one in the Gulf of Mexico)
 - Atlantic stock: overfished and overfishing was occurring
 - Gulf of Mexico stock: the assessment was not accepted and therefore, the stock status is unknown

- Amendment 5a Final Rule (July 3, 2013)
 - Divided the blacknose and non-blacknose SCS quotas into Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regional quotas and linked the regional blacknose and non-blacknose SCS quotas

Background (cont'd)

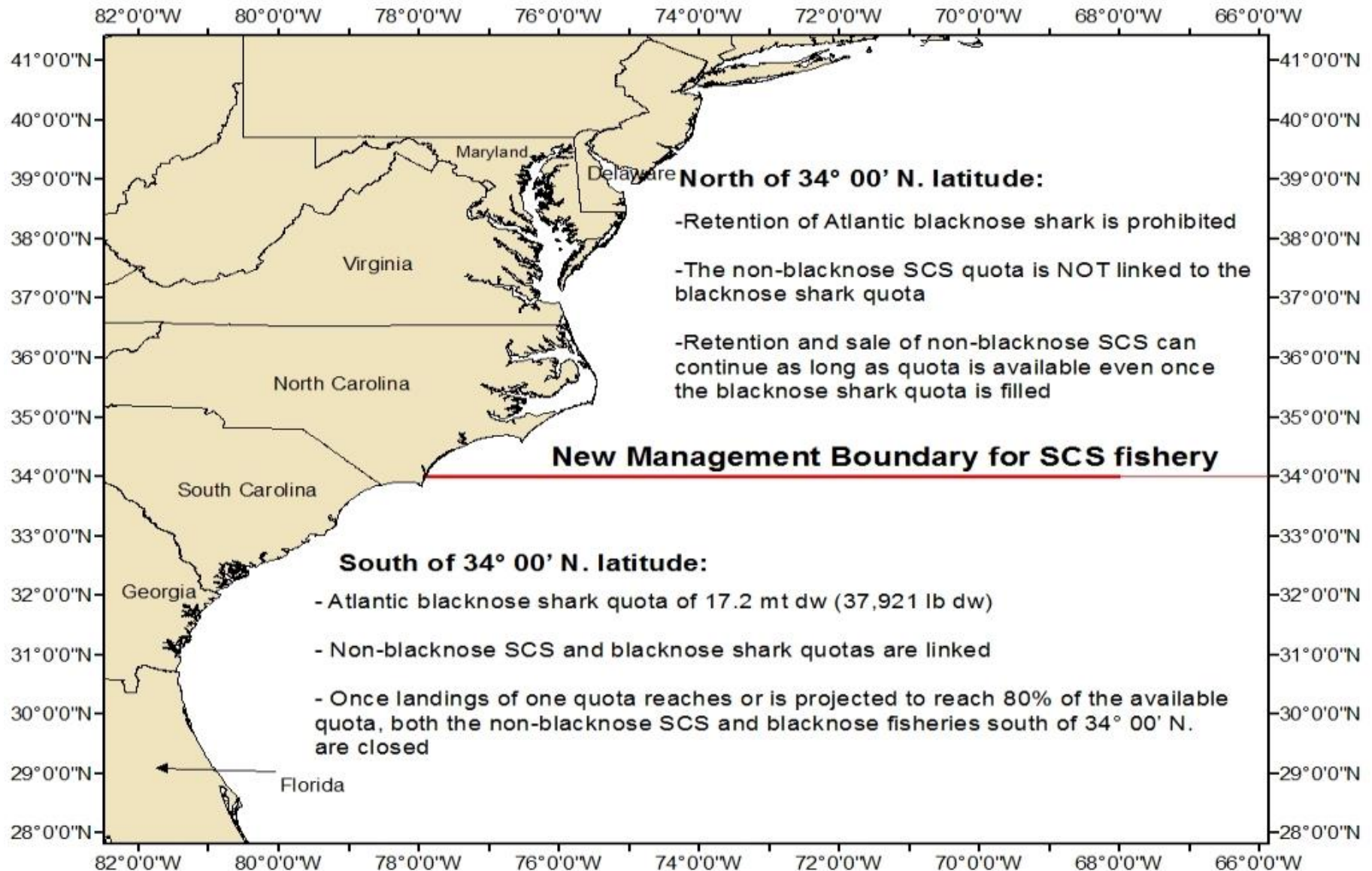
➤ Recent Years

- Some fishermen have been landing large numbers of blacknose sharks
- Non-blacknose SCS fishery has closed early due to the quota linkage (e.g., September 2013, July 2014, June 2015, and May 2016)
- The non-blacknose SCS quota has been underutilized, as all SCS must be discarded once the fisheries are closed
- Blacknose shark quota exceeded in 2012 and 2015

Vessels with Directed and Incidental Permits Landing Blacknose Sharks

| Year | Number of Vessels | Number of Trips | % Weight of Blacknose Landed per Trip (lb dw) | | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|---|-------|-------|-----|
| | | | 0-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76+ |
| 2010 | 29 | 200 | 158 | 30 | 4 | 8 |
| 2011 | 23 | 139 | 114 | 11 | 5 | 9 |
| 2012 | 27 | 187 | 133 | 29 | 14 | 11 |
| 2013 | 24 | 203 | 166 | 27 | 7 | 3 |
| 2014 | 21 | 145 | 61 | 46 | 24 | 14 |
| 2015 | 20 | 91 | 45 | 7 | 8 | 31 |

Amendment 6 (August 18, 2015)



Background (cont'd)

- Post Amendment 6
 - NMFS has received comments from fishermen and a request from the SAFMC to address discards of non-blacknose SCS in the Spanish mackerel gillnet fishery
 - Commenters stated that catches of Atlantic SCS are unavoidable and gillnet fishermen must discard the marketable non-blacknose SCS catch, even though non-blacknose SCS quotas remain unharvested
 - Commenters would like to reduce regulatory discards and improve economic opportunities for these fishermen

Rulemaking Goals

- Continue to rebuild the Atlantic blacknose shark stock
- End overfishing of the Atlantic blacknose shark stock
- Achieve optimum yield in the blacknose and non-blacknose SCS fisheries
- Reduce dead discards of small coastal sharks

List of Alternatives

- Alternative 1: No Action. Do not implement any new commercial retention limit for small coastal sharks in the Atlantic region south of 34°00'N. latitude. Do not adjust the blacknose shark baseline quota
- Alternative 2: Establish a commercial retention limit of non-blacknose SCS for shark directed limited access permit holders in the Atlantic region south of 34°00'N. latitude once the blacknose shark quota is reached and adjust accordingly the blacknose shark quota to account for dead discards
- Alternative 3: Establish a commercial retention limit for blacknose sharks for all Atlantic shark limited access permit holders in the Atlantic region south of 34°00'N. latitude



No Action Alternative

- NMFS would maintain the status quo and not implement a commercial retention for blacknose sharks in the Atlantic region
- Current retention limits for SCS
 - Shark Directed Limited Access Permit Holders: No retention limit for shark directed limited access permit holders
 - Shark Incidental Limited Access Permit Holders: Combined total of 16 pelagic and SCS per trip
- Baseline shark quotas:
 - Blacknose shark: 17.2 mt dw (37,921 lb dw)
 - Non-blacknose SCS: 264.1 mt dw (582,333 lb dw)
- When landings have reached or projected to reach 80 percent of either the blacknose or the non-blacknose SCS quota, both fisheries will close south of 34°00'N. latitude

Number of trips per year for Atlantic blacknose sharks based on the average landings per trip

| Year | (A) Average Weight of Blacknose Shark Landings per Trip (lb dw) | (B) Number of Trips per Year That Could Land the Blacknose Shark Quota (number) = 37,921/A |
|---------|--|--|
| 2010 | 140 | 271 |
| 2011 | 189 | 201 |
| 2012 | 161 | 236 |
| 2013 | 135 | 281 |
| 2014 | 243 | 156 |
| 2015 | 402 | 94 |
| Average | 212 | 207 |

Alternative 2

- Establish a commercial retention limit of non-blacknose SCS for shark directed limited access permit holders in the Atlantic region south of 34°00'N. latitude once the blacknose shark quota is reached and adjust accordingly the blacknose shark quota to account for dead discards
 - Alternative 2a: Establish a commercial retention limit of 50 non-blacknose SCS per trip and adjust the blacknose shark quota to 15.0 mt dw (33,069 lb dw)
 - Alternative 2b: Establish a commercial retention limit of 150 for non-blacknose SCS per trip and adjust the blacknose shark quota to 10.5 mt dw (23,148 lb dw)
 - Alternative 2c: Establish a commercial retention limit of 250 for non-blacknose SCS per trip and adjust the blacknose shark quota to 6.1 mt dw (13,448 lb dw)

Alternative 2 in detail

Calculations of potential blacknose shark quotas needed to account for dead discards of blacknose sharks for various non-blacknose SCS commercial retention limits once the blacknose shark quota is reached.

| Alternatives | (A) Non-Blacknose SCS Retention Limit | (B) Blacknose Shark Discards per Retention Limit (A / 3 = B) ¹ | (C) Blacknose Shark Discards (B x 118 = C) ² | (D) Blacknose Shark Dead Discards (C x 0.50 = D) ³ | (E) Blacknose Shark Quota Adjustment (D x 5lb dw = E) ⁴ | (F) Blacknose Shark Quota Under the Different Alternatives (17.2 mt dw – E = F) ⁵ |
|--------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| 2a | 50 sharks | 16.7 sharks | 1,971 sharks | 986 sharks | 2.2 mt dw (4,930 lb dw) | 15.0 mt dw (33,069 lb dw) |
| 2b | 150 sharks | 50 sharks | 5,900 sharks | 2,950 sharks | 6.7 mt dw (14,750 lb dw) | 10.5 mt dw (23,148 lb dw) |
| 2c | 250 sharks | 83.3 sharks | 9,829 sharks | 4,915 sharks | 11.1 mt dw (24,575 lb dw) | 6.1 mt dw (13,448 lb dw) |

¹ Column B: Catch composition of non-blacknose SCS to blacknose sharks is 3:1

² Column C: Average number of trips that landed sharks with gillnet gear was 118

³ Column D: Dead discard rate for blacknose sharks is 50%

⁴ Column E: Average weight of blacknose sharks with gillnet gear = 5 lb dw

⁵ Column F: Atlantic blacknose shark baseline quota is 17.2 mt dw (37,921 lb dw).

Alternative 3

- Establish a commercial retention limit for blacknose sharks for all Atlantic shark limited access permit holders in the Atlantic region south of 34°00'N. latitude
- Alternative 3a: Establish a commercial retention limit of 50 blacknose sharks per trip for shark directed limited access permit holders
- Alternative 3b: Establish a commercial retention limit of 16 blacknose sharks per trip for all Atlantic shark limited access permit holders
- **Alternative 3c: Establish a commercial retention limit of 8 blacknose sharks per trip for all Atlantic shark limited access permit holders – Preferred Alternative**

Alternative 3 in detail

Retention limits and number of trips per year for Atlantic blacknose sharks under the different potential alternatives.

| Alternatives | (A) Retention Limit | (B) Average Weight of Blacknose Shark Landings per Trip (A x 5 lb dw = B) ¹ | (C) Number of Trips per Year That Could Land the Blacknose Shark Quota ² (number) (37,921 / B = C) |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| 3a | 50 | 250 lb dw | 113 |
| 3b | 16 | 80 lb dw | 354 |
| 3c | 8 | 40 lb dw | 707 |
| Average (2010-2015) | - | 212 lb dw | 207 |

¹ Column B: Average weight of blacknose sharks with gillnet gear = 5 lb dw

² Assuming each trip lands the full retention limit

Timeline

- 1) Proposed rule published on August 3, 2016
- 2) Proposed rule public hearing/webinar in August 2016
- 3) Discussions at the HMS AP Meeting (Sept 7-8) and SAFMC (Sept 14-15)
- 4) Comment Period Ends – **September 20, 2016**
- 5) Target effective for 2017 commercial shark fishing season

Presentation Schedule

| Venue | Date and Time | Location |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Conference call / Webinar | Aug 16 – 2 pm to 4 pm | To participate in conference call, call: (888) 635-5002 Passcode: 6429428 To participate in webinar, RSVP at: https://noaaevents2.webex.com/noaaevents2/onsstage/g.php?MTID=e2a3c0722f8a4bee1c303445a56b6a065 , A confirmation email with webinar log-in information will be sent after RSVP is registered. |
| Public Hearing | Aug 24 – 5pm to 8 pm | Cocoa Beach, FL |
| HMS AP Meeting | Sept 7/8 – TBD | Silver Spring, MD |
| SAFMC | Sept 15 – TBD | Myrtle Beach, SC |

Request for Public Comments

Comment period closes on:

September 20, 2016

Please submit comments to:

<http://www.regulations.gov>

Keyword - "NOAA-NMFS-2016-0095"

Comments can also be submitted via fax: 301-713-1917, Attn: Guý DuBeck

Or Mail: NMFS SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Please identify comments with NOAA-HQ-2016-0047

For more information go to: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>

Additional Questions?

guy.dubeck@noaa.gov or 301-427-8503

Additional Questions or Comments?

Please share them with us!

Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Guý DuBeck, Larry Redd, or Cliff Hutt
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Division
301-427-8503

